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THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

Glóir do Dhia a n-áraí hárduib, agus ríodhán aip an dtalamh deaigteoil do na dáoibh.

LUKE ii. 14.

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CAN THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH OF ROME BE PROVED FROM ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND THE WRITINGS OF THE EARLY FATHERS?

NO. III.

In our last number we showed that the passage (of Irenaeus) on which Roman Catholic divines rely most in proof of the early recognition of the supremacy of the Roman See, does not justify the conclusion which they seek to derive from it; and we promised to adduce in support of our position the authority of Hippolytus, a scholar of Irenaeus, and a suffragan bishop of the Roman Church in the beginning of the third century, and who must have been well acquainted with the sentiments of his master and with the general doctrine of the Church at that day.

This Hippolytus, whom the Church of Rome has canonized as a martyr, was Bishop of Portus Romanus, or the Harbour of Rome, at the northern mouth of the Tiber.* He was contemporary with Popes Zephyrinus and Callistus, and suffered martyrdom, in all probability, under Maximin, about A.D. 236.

He was the author of a work, entitled "PHILOSOPHUMENA; OR, A REFUTATION OF ALL HERESIES" (Φιλοσοφίμενα η κατά πασῶν αἵρεσεων ἐλεγχός). It consisted, when entire, of ten books; of those ten, the second, third, and the beginning of the fourth, do not appear to be now extant. The first has been known for a considerable time, and has hitherto been printed among the works of Origen, to whom it was erroneously attributed; the remaining books (from the fourth to the tenth) were discovered in MS., and brought with several others from the monasteries of Mount Athos, in the year 1842, and were published for the first time in 1851.† The editor, M. Miller, perceived that they were part of the same work of which the first book was already, as we have said, attributed to Origen; and he, accordingly, published them as Origen's. But the Chevalier Bunsen and other eminent scholars have since shown, by most convincing arguments, that the author was not Origen, but Hippolytus.

The importance of this discovery it is hardly possible to overrate. In the sixth and seventh books the author is often treading on the same ground as that traversed by Irenaeus in his work on heresies, to whom he expressly acknowledges his obligations, and from whom he frequently transcribes, either verbatim or with some alterations. We have thus in some instances the original Greek of Irenaeus restored to us, where we hitherto possessed only the Latin translation: so that the recovery of this work is, to some extent, a recovery of the lost text of Irenaeus. But it is

* This is the opinion of the most celebrated ecclesiastical historians and divines of the Church of Rome—e.g., Baronius and Bellarmine. Le Moine's hypothesis, that the Portus Romanus, of which Hippolytus was bishop, was Aden, near the entrance of the Red Sea, is now generally abandoned as untenable.

† The first four books contained an account of the various systems of ancient philosophy—whence the title, "Philosophumena." The next five treat of the various heresies which had appeared in the Church from the apostolic age to Hippolytus's own time—whence the second title above given. The tenth book contains an epitome of the rest.

with the historical portion of the work—contained in the ninth and tenth books—that we are now chiefly concerned. Here we have a portion of ancient Church history unfolded to us with which, from the lack of materials, our acquaintance has been hitherto most imperfect, and which is of the greatest importance to us, from its relation to certain questions of Christian doctrine and Church discipline which are agitated at the present time.

Let it, then, be borne in mind that the author whose testimony we are about to cite was the scholar of the great Irenaeus; one of the suffragan bishops of the Roman Church; one who passed his life at or in the vicinity of Rome; one who was honoured in his day, and has ever since been honoured as one of the leading teachers of the Church; one whom the Church of Rome herself now venerates as a martyr, and commemorates as a saint; one whose statue, discovered 300 years ago, has been received in the Vatican, and placed in the pontifical library, as a mark of honourable distinction.

The testimony of such a man with respect to the Bishop of Rome in those times, must be of the greatest value and interest. Did he look upon him as the supreme head of the universal Church, to whom it was his own duty, as well as that of all other Christians, implicitly to submit? Did he venerate him as the infallible Vicar of Christ? or does he give any intimation that the Bishops of Rome were so regarded by others, or even by themselves? Does he, in short, indicate in any way that claims to supremacy or infallibility were put forth in that age?

Now, in answer to these questions, we learn, from the ninth book, that two Bishops of Rome in succession—Zephyrinus and Callistus—fell into the Noetian heresy. Noetus did not acknowledge the Son of God to be the *Logos*, or Word, and he denied the distinct personality of the Son, affirming that the Son is the same as the Father, only under a different name. These two Roman bishops, at the very beginning of the third century, lapsed into heresy on a fundamental article of Christian faith. They strenuously maintained that heresy, and propagated by their official authority as Bishops of Rome a doctrine which the Church of Rome herself, with all other Churches of Christendom, now declare to be heretical.

Hence it follows that the Bishops of Rome, in the earliest times of which we have any extant records, erred in matters of faith, and in their official capacity. And, consequently, the infallibility of the Roman See is a doctrine opposed to the truth of history.

What we have just said of the heresy of these two early Popes is remarkable enough; but it is, perhaps, still more surprising to find them enrolled among the saints and martyrs in the public liturgy of the Roman Church. "What a shock," it has been well observed, "must such a discovery give to its faith! How can it place any confidence in the records of the Breviary, or join with heartiness in the prayers tendered there for its use? Thus superstition leads to scepticism, and pious frauds prepare the way for infidelity. And yet one of the so-called reforms for which the Church of Rome is now contending is to make all Churches surrender their own liturgies to the Roman Breviary!"

And if infallibility was not an attribute of the See of Rome in the age of Hippolytus, neither was its supremacy acknowledged. When Zephyrinus and Callistus fell into heresy, and endeavoured to disseminate their false doctrine, Hippolytus resisted them, without appearing to consider himself in the slightest degree bound to conform to them in their doctrine. On the contrary, he boldly stood forth and rebuked them; and thus has given a practical reply to the question which has been raised concerning the meaning of his master, Irenaeus, in the passage quoted in our last number. Hippolytus never learnt from Irenaeus that every Church and every Christian must conform to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as such. Let, then, Roman Catholics no longer urge against us the authority of Irenaeus. We have in the acts of his scholar, Hippolytus, a commentary upon his words, which speaks too plainly to be misunderstood.

Nor, again, does it appear from the narrative before us, that the Bishops of Rome themselves, in the early part of the third century, entertained any notion that they were supreme Heads of the Church, to whom all other Churches were bound to submit. For though Hippolytus was charged by Zephyrinus and Callistus with being a *Ditheist* (a be-

liever in *two Gods*), because he would not confess with them that the Father and the Son are but one Divine Being, under two different names; yet we can discover no intimation that he was accused of heresy on the ground of resisting the Supreme Head of the Church, and rebelling against the Divine authority of Christ's Vicar upon earth.

We are all aware that, according to the *theory* of the Church of Rome, the official prerogatives of a Pope are quite independent of his moral character. The monster, Alexander VI., the ferocious warrior, Julian II., the voluptuary, Leo X., were, according to that theory, no less infallible than the most pious and virtuous successors of St. Peter. Still it may suggest some thoughts as to the soundness of the theory itself, if we consider for a moment the account given by Hippolytus of the earlier life and character of Pope Callistus,* above mentioned, who, it will be remembered, filled the apostolic chair in the early part of the third century.

Pope Callistus, then, was originally a servant of a certain Carpophorus, a Christian of the Emperor Commodus' household. His master set him up as a banker, intrusting to him a considerable sum of money. Many deposits were lodged in this bank by Christian brethren and widows, upon the strength of the high character which Carpophorus bore. But Callistus turned out a rogue, embezzled the money, became bankrupt, and ran away. Having made his way to the harbour (Portus), about twenty miles from Rome, he found a ship ready to start, and embarked. Carpophorus pursued the defaulter; but when Callistus saw him approaching the ship in a boat, he threw himself overboard, and, being with difficulty saved from drowning, was delivered up to his master, who brought him back to Rome, and confined him in the *pistrinum*, or domestic treadmill of the Romans. Some time after, certain good-natured persons came to Carpophorus, and begged him to release poor Callistus, who declared that there were outstanding debts due to him, which, if he were at liberty, he could recover. Carpophorus, like a pious man, said that he did not care for his own loss, but that he was anxious about the money of the poor depositors, and, therefore, he consented to set him free. All this was only a pretext on the part of Callistus to regain his liberty. But finding that he was watched, and could not again run away, and having nothing to give his creditors, he resolved upon self-destruction; and, with this view, he entered a synagogue of the Jews, on their Sabbath day, and raised a great uproar. The insulted Israelites did not kill him outright; but, after beating him to their satisfaction, dragged him to the Roman prefect. He sentenced the culprit to be scourged, and then transported him to the mines of Sardinia. Some time after, Marcia, a devout Roman lady, who had influence with the Emperor Commodus, being desirous of doing a good work, sent for Victor, who was then Bishop of Rome, and asked what Christians had been transported to Sardinia. He gave her a list, in which the name of Callistus did not appear, doubtless because the good bishop knew what sort of character he was. Marcia obtained the letter of pardon from the Emperor; whereupon the governor of the island liberated all the Christian prisoners, except poor Callistus. He wept and prayed so hard, however, that the royal messenger prevailed on the governor to release him. When he arrived at Rome, Victor was very much annoyed and perplexed; but, to avoid scandal, held his tongue, and sent him off to Antium, giving him a certain monthly allowance. Here he remained till Victor's death, when Zephyrinus, the successor of Victor, became his patron, and made him his coadjutor, to keep the clergy in order. All went on smoothly till the death of Zephyrinus, when the insolvent banker and quondam runaway slave succeeded to the vacant throne, and signalized his episcopacy by adopting, as we have seen, the Noetian heresy. Such are the antecedents of Pope Callistus, as detailed by Hippolytus in his newly discovered work.

We cannot conclude better than with the following words of the distinguished writer from whom we have derived much of the materials of this article:†—“Great reason have all persons, of whatever nation, for gratitude

* Roman Catholic writers have, of course, attempted to deny the identity of Pope Callistus with Callistus the heretic, spoken of by Hippolytus; but of the fact of their identity there can be no reasonable doubt.—*Vid. Wordsworth, Hippolytus*, p. 81, sq.

† Wordsworth, "Hippolytus," p. 219.

to the Almighty God, that he has thus watched over the work of his faithful soldier and servant, the blessed martyr, Hippolytus. We, of the Church of England, may recognise in this treatise a Catholic and Apostolic—yes, and a Roman—vindicator of our own Reformation. Here, a Roman bishop, saint, and martyr, supplies us with a defence of our own religious position with respect to Rome. In his 'Refutation of all Heresies' we see a practical refutation of that great heresy of our own day—the heresy which, either directly or indirectly, is at the root of many prevalent heresies—the heresy of Papal supremacy and Papal infallibility. Whenever, then, we are charged by Romish divines with heresy and schism for not acknowledging the Bishop of Rome as supreme head of the Church and infallible arbiter of the faith, we may henceforth refer them to the marble statue in the Vatican, and bid them consult the treatise of St. Hippolytus. Thankful, however, as we ought to be for this recent discovery, perhaps they who have cause to be most grateful are the clergy and laity of Rome. Truth is to be prized above all things, especially in matters of faith. Arguments from *adversaries*, real or supposed, and especially from contemporaneous *adversaries*, are often regarded with suspicion, and rejected with scorn; but here the members of the Church of Rome may read a treatise, written by one whose name they love and venerate, one who has no interests to serve, no passions to gratify—a Bishop, Doctor, Saint, and Martyr of their own Church. He speaks to them from the grave, and from primitive times. May it please the same merciful Providence, which has awakened the voice of Hippolytus from its silence of sixteen centuries, to bless its accents to their souls' health! May it be so blessed from on high, that it may promote the cause of Truth, and the Unity of the Church, and the Glory of Almighty God, now and for evermore.

◆
DOES THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME ANSWER THE TRUE ENDS OF DEVOTION?

THE advocates of the Church of Rome appear to rely much on the assertion that they are a more *devout* people than those of any other religion; that their practices are more agreeable to the self-denial and mortification recommended in Scripture; that God is more constantly and reverently served among them than among Protestants; and that they take more pains, and are at more cost and trouble in the worship of God, which practically evidences a good, religious mind, and one which must be most secure of God's acceptance.

We doubt not that there are many earnest and conscientious Roman Catholics who sincerely believe that the religion of the heart is not to be found, except within the pale of the Church of Rome; and as our Lord Jesus Christ has himself laid down the criterion of his true followers to be—"By their *fruits* ye shall know them. Not every one who saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. vii. 20, 21) we freely admit that there is no better test of the truth of any religion than its adaptation to produce the fruits of real virtue in those who cordially and consistently embrace it.

Without venturing to prejudge a matter of such vast practical importance, we would remark, that it is not always those who make the loudest profession of religion that are the most devout or consistent in either their feelings or their lives; and that it is one thing for a Church really to advance true devotion and piety to God, and another to appear to do so, by making a *great show* and *noise* about it. Sir Edwin Sandys, whose name has already been several times referred to in this journal, has observed, that "the Church of Rome has so contrived its rules and orders, as rather to comply with and fit every temper and inclination, good or bad, than to work any real good effect on any." This observation may seem severe; but whether it be justified by fact and experience we shall presently see when we have examined a little more minutely the frame and constitution of that Church, with a view to discerning whether it be really more fitted for the exciting of true devotion, and leading a good life, than that of the Church to which we belong, and which we believe to be the true Church of Christ and his Apostles.

Before we can apply the test supplied by our Blessed Lord, we must, however, understand what is the meaning of it—*what is DOING the will of our Heavenly Father?* Performing "good works," says the Church of Rome. We shall discuss this hereafter; but, for argument's sake, let it pass for the present, and let us first inquire what are the *good works*, the doing of which, it is said, will gain man entrance into the heavenly kingdom?

Most dispassionate men will, we think, agree in the definition that a good work is an action useful to others, inspired by an unselfish feeling. To make a work good, there must be a pure intention as well as a generous action. In judging of other men's actions we always look beyond the mere external conduct to the internal motive which led to it. Have we not always a natural inclination to search into the intentions of those whom we see acting around us? Every one will freely admit, that patriotism inspired by *vanity* or *selfishness* is not true patriotism; that devotedness based on ambition for power or personal aggrandizement, is not devotion; liberality instigated by a desire of *praise and fame*, is not charity.

There are everywhere Pharisees who make long prayers—to be seen of men; who invite to feasts—those who can invite them in return. Patriots who struggle for their country—only until they are in a position to sell and to betray it. Philosophers who worship knowledge—as the high road to the Temple of Fame. Warriors who magnanimously risk their lives—for a coronet or a kingdom. Philanthropists who erect posthumous hospitals—at the expense of their posterity. Alas! how few are there whose motives will bear a close investigation. Let each one study himself, and scrutinize a little into the secret springs of his best actions, and say whether the dismal truth be not the same still that our Blessed Lord proclaimed it to be in His time—"There is none that *doeth good*; no, not one!"

What are we, then, to think of the self-satisfaction of the thousands, who are trusting to their good works as a sure passport to heaven, but this, that such men take but a superficial view of their own conduct, and give little attention to the motives by which they are actuated, thinking only of the results they produce? What care ordinary men for the purity of the spring, so long as the stream, muddy or clean, fertilizes the land?"

And yet these *practical* men, as they would be deemed, are not without their show of reason. If the heart be always to be thus searched and analyzed, say they, no one will be sufficient to bear the examination—the best men will be discouraged, and *found wanting*—and, after all, is not the *work* the essential matter? What else has the world any concern in? Is it not the *work* that relieves the wretched? Whether the *intention* be holy or vain-glorious, the result is the same. In either case, are not the poor and sick relieved and society benefitted? Ought we not, therefore, to applaud the act, and care little for the intention? Thus society connives at setting up a new definition of goodness, and lowers the standard of virtue to include works springing from the impure fountain of vanity and ambition—as if good works, done to be seen of men, could delude God, who searcheth the heart, and in whose sight the very heavens are unclean! Is this *doing the will* of our Father who is in heaven?

The next step in the downward path of those who look to good works to save them, seems to us to be this—"The law of God strictly enjoins us to constant vigilance over *all* the acts of our lives—to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation." We are not to kill, nor injure, nor revenge, nor steal, nor even covet. Surely, such strict vigilance over ourselves, in every act of our lives, is impracticable, and would render life intolerable! Among good works to be done, surely a choice may be made; one may take the place of another. He to whom prayers are irksome may make it up in alms-giving—each may thus accept what he does not dislike, and overlook what is not according to his taste. Thus is a flexible law substituted for the inflexible law of God, and *good works made more easy*. This is *practical* step the second in the downward path of those who look to good works for their salvation! Is this *doing the will* of our Father who is in heaven? or is it not rather doing our own will, who are of the earth—earthly?

We have still to trace the matter further. Having got rid of the trouble of scrutinizing our motives, and allowed ourselves to choose those duties and virtues which are most palatable or easy to us, we *still* have *good works to do*, or we cannot be saved by them; and as moral works, even when confined to the mere outward act, are burdensome, and not always easy to be performed, we begin to think that the pain they cause must be acceptable to God, and that the more toilsome they are the more meritorious they must be—*suffering* is, after all, the essential point. Do we love repose and home?—let us go on laborious pilgrimages. Do we enjoy the indulgences of a well-provided board?—let us mortify ourselves with fasts and abstinences. Bodily pain is repugnant—let us scourge our flesh with voluntary flagellations. Pity, however, that we are in all these matters outdone by the Pagans themselves. Roman Catholic devotees are far exceeded by the idolatrous Indians. The Fakirs, among the Buddhists, will stand with their arms stretched out, till their limbs wither. A Roman Catholic devotee will perform his stations round a stone cross upon his knees; but Indian devotees will perform a pilgrimage from one end of Hindostan to the other, prostrating themselves, and measuring the road with the length of their own bodies. The Turkish fast of Ramadhan far exceeds, in severity, the fast of Lent in Europe. Perhaps, you think it meritorious to wear hair-cloth next your skin, and use the scourge; but what is that to the worshippers of Juggernaut, who prostrate their bodies to be crushed under their idol's car, and run an iron hook through their ribs, and swing themselves in the air! Here are sufferings, mortifications—shall we say merits? How have these fanatics arrived at this, but by indulging the belief, that *physical pain* may be substituted for moral works, so as to purchase by suffering the liberty of indulging their passions? Man practically feeling the difficulty of doing works truly good, tries to compound with God by *substituting works of suffering*! This is *practical* step the third in the downward path of those who look to good works for their salvation. Is God a demon, taking a savage delight in the misery of his creatures? Is this *doing the will* of our Father who is in heaven?

Good works of this kind being somewhat too hard for ordinary *practical* men, means must next be found to mitigate them. Piety must be *made easy*, or it will soon be out

of fashion. Is fasting too severe for you?—a dispensation is ready at hand, if you will only pay for it. Do you dislike abstinence?—you may purchase the privilege of eating meat. Is there any rule so strict in the Church of Rome that it may not be dispensed with, at convenience, for money? To repeat prayers and submit to other penances is irksome; but if you be rich, and a chapel or convent to be built, is there not a means of escape which *practical* men can easily avail themselves of, and thereby escape the *punishment* of long prayers? Alas! that prayers should ever have been made so spiritless as to be imposed as a *punishment*. What a sad view of Christianity! Man prays to God as a punishment—as a punishment he asks God to bless him, and this prayer, instead of a privilege, is made a burden, and Christian men are driven to the task of *counting* prayers by rosaries, as the Bedouin Arabs in Algeria, or the Muffis at Cairo, who repeat the name of God ten thousand times in an hour, and call that piety. Would it not be as useful to have a thousand rosaries wound off by a steam engine? Is this *doing the will* of our Father which is in Heaven, or is it a still lower step in the downward path of him who looks to his *good works* to bring him to Heaven?

One step more, and we have done. There are men who believe they may do their good works by proxy. There are Moslem pilgrims who go to Mecca for other Mussulmen. Are there not priests here, too, who say masses for anybody who will pay for them? Does not the Church of Rome boast she has a treasury of the funded merits of the supererogatory good works of the saints, which she will dispense at small cost to those who need indulgences to make up for their own deficiencies? What is this but *good works done by proxy*? Alas! is this the way to attain Heaven, by *doing the will* of our Father who is in Heaven? and can any better proof be wanting that it is actually the truth, and that *practical* men feel it to be so, that by *their own good works* they cannot merit heaven or earn salvation?

Do we, then, wish to disown such good works as being useless or impracticable? Our readers shall judge in our next; and in the meantime we would earnestly recommend to them the able tracts of Napoleon Roussel, to which we are largely indebted for many of the ideas we have here brought before our readers, and which are full of materials for thought worthy the attention of Irishmen at the present crisis.

◆
THE INDEX PROHIBITUS AND THE INDEX EXPURGATORIUS.

A QUESTION often arises, how far it is just or fair to take books written by individual members of a Church, as proof of the real doctrine and teaching of that Church.

For instance, if we were to produce any very extravagant doctrine from a Roman Catholic writer, and to say that this was the doctrine of the Church of Rome, we would at once be told that this was unfair; that the doctrine in question was only the doctrine of that individual, and not the doctrine of the Church.

We admit that this argument is a very fair one, in a general view; for no man is bound to believe everything that every other person in the same Church with him may choose to believe.

But other circumstances may sometimes make a Church very deeply responsible for what its writers print and publish; and may make it much more difficult for individual members of that Church to free themselves from being involved in the errors published by others.

If individual members say that their Church infallibly provides for universal agreement in doctrine among the teachers and doctors of their Church, then it is not so easy for them to reply that what those teachers and doctors print and publish is only their own opinions and errors, and not the doctrine of their Church.

And if we find a general consent and agreement among a great number of the doctors of that Church, in propagating a particular opinion, then it is still harder to say that it is not the doctrine of that Church.

For instance, in the question about worshipping of images, if we were to quote Azorius, saying—"The image is to be worshipped with the same honour and worship with which we worship those whose image it is,"* and were to say that this is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, we should, of course, be told that we were arguing unfairly; that this was only the opinion of that individual doctor, and that it is not the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and that Roman Catholics do not believe in it.

Now, while we admit that one man is not to be charged with the error of another, if he really does not hold it himself, we are at least entitled to say that the Church of Rome does not succeed in preventing her most famous doctors and teachers falling into most grievous and sinful errors.

And when we show that Azorius himself says that very doctrine (in the place above referred to)—"This is the constant sentence of the divines;" and when we further show that the great St. Thomas, Alexander of Ales, Bonaventure, Albertus, Richardus, Capreolus, Cajetan, Coster, Valentia, Vasquez, and many others of the greatest authority in the Church of Rome, say the same thing, it certainly becomes much harder to clear the Church of Rome of approving of this doctrine.

But when we come further to consider the laws and in-

* Institut. Moral, par. I., l. 9, c. 6.